DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 416 152 SO 028 139

AUTHOR	Pipkin, Ruthanne
TITLE	Women's Life Experiences in Contemporary India. Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminar Abroad 1994 (India).
INSTITUTION	United States Educational Foundation in India.
PUB DATE	1994-00-00
NOTE	43p.; For other Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminar Abroad 1994 reports, see SO 028 135-143.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Asian Studies; Course Content; Course Descriptions; Ethnic Groups; *Females; Foreign Countries; *Global Education; High Schools; *Indians; Interdisciplinary Approach; Multicultural Education; Non Western Civilization; Religion Studies; Social Studies; *World Literature
IDENTIFIERS	*India

ABSTRACT

This unit, intended for high school use, examines the role of women in India as portrayed in selected literature. The books used include: (1) "Women in India: Two Perspectives" (Doranne Jacobson; Susan S. Wadley); (2) "Through Indian Eyes, Volume 1. The Wheel of Life" (Donald J. Johnson, Ed.; Jean E. Johnson, Ed.); (3) "Nectar in a Sieve" (Kamala Markandaya); (4) "Jasmine" (Bharati Mukherjee); and (5) "May You Be the Mother of a Hundred Sons" (Elisabeth Bumiller). Suggested questions to focus each reading are provided. (EH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 416 152

Woman's Life Experiences in Contemporary India

Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminar Abroad 1994 (India)

Curriculum Projects Developed by 1994 Seminar Participants

Submitted to

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), USDE

By

United States Educational Foundation in India

SO 028 139

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WOMEN'S LIFE EXPERIENCES IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

FULBRIGHT PROJECT
RUTHANNE PIPKIN
SUMMER 1994

WOMEN'S LIFE EXPERIENCES IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA
OBJECTIVES

The rational for this lesson is to help students develop new understanding and sensitivity towards another culture and to help them develop skills for learning to ask questions about and explore alternatives within their own lives. This lesson has been designed for individual assignments but it could also be adapted for classroom use, or as enrichment or extra credit. It could be used in World Cultures courses, Contemporary Problems, Current World Issues, Cultural Geography, Sociology, or Women's Studies courses. It is intended for high school use.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. Describe the societal position of women in Indian society, recognizing the tremendous differences within the society.
2. To begin to define the cultural, historical and personal factors which affect decisions in the lives of these women and to understand the cultural, historical and personal factors which currently affect one's own life.
3. To become familiar with the female experience in Indian society, to understand some of their experiences, their values, the obstacles they face, the dreams they have.
4. To be able to recognize ethnic and sexual stereotypes and describe possible economic and personal consequences of specific stereotypes on their own futures.
5. Describe changes either positive or negative that women in Indian society have experienced. Consider the number and quality of options open to them in their activities, persons they can relate to, places they can live in or travel to or visit. Consider the degree of satisfaction they gain from their lives.

Strategies: The students will read, think, and write about cultural patterns, social institutions, attitudes and personal actions which affect the lives of these Indian women. They can then begin an analysis of similar factors which have affected their lives. This lesson could be extended by interviewing or reading about women from other cultures or interviewing a variety of women within their own lives to recognize the various factors in American society which combine to create the female experience here in the United States.

The students could do any variation of the following assignments:

1. Read Women In India: Two Perspectives, Doranne Jacobson and Susan S. Wadley, Manohar Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, India. 1992, and answer the questions included in this project.

2. Read Through Indian Eyes, vol. I The Wheel of Life, edited by Donald J. and Jean E. Johnson, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1975, pp13 - 91. The Teachers Lesson Plans which are available through CITE, New York and Washington, offers excellent, thought provoking questions which involve the student in interacting with the material and challenging them to re-examine many of their own values.

3. Read Nectar in a Sieve, Kamala Markandaya, The John Day Company, 1954. Included in this unit are questions for this assignment.

4. Read Jasmine, Bharati Mukherjee, Grove Weidenfeld, New York, 1989. Questions for this book are also included in this packet. Students could also be asked to write a comparative paper in which they compare books 3 and 4 which are fiction with books 1 and 2 which are non-fiction accounts. Students can begin to identify cultural factors in India which consistently pressure women to behave a certain way. They can then begin to identify factors in the lives of women in other societies or factors in their own lives that they recognize have shaped them.

5. Read May You Be the Mother of a Hundred Sons, Elisabeth Burniller, Peguin Books, New Delhi, Random House, New York, 1990. A study guide for this is included in packet.

WOMEN IN INDIA: TWO PERSPECTIVES
DORANNE JACOBSON & SUSAN WILEY
Teacher guide

Moltherhood and female children

Growing Up In North and Central India p. 24

1. Discuss where the bride lives when she gets married? How is this significantly different than the practice in the U.S.? p. 24
2. What difficulties might an old widowed woman face if she has only had daughters? How would a woman in similar circumstance be provided for in the U.S.?
3. In what ways was Munni treated as special? How are girl children often treated in Indian society? p. 30
4. Why is a girl considered a liability? p. 31
5. What conclusions can be drawn from statistics that show there are fewer females than males in Northern India?
6. What responsibilities do girls as young as six have in families? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of giving girls this training. p. 32
7. What is the attitude toward female literacy? Discuss the long term effects of this attitude. What differences do you see in the attitudes in the U.S. about the educations of girls and boys? p. 33
8. Once a village woman is married how limited is interaction with the opposite sex? Discuss how you think this effects the socialization of women. p. 36
9. Discuss how are women isolated from men and from each other in both Hindu and Muslim customs.
10. What are some of the first steps taken to begin the marriage process for Munni? p. 41
11. Why do you think the government would want to limit child marriages? How successful have they been? Can you think of any laws that have been passed in the U.S. that have not changed the activity they intended to? p. 41
12. How does the attitude toward unwed women differ in the villages and in the cities? p. 42 How do you think unwed women are viewed in American society?
13. What is the double standard that exists in India about sexual behavior? Do we still have a double standard in the U.S.?
14. What are some of the factors that would be considered in arranging a match between a prospective bride and groom? What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of such an arranged marriage? Compare the custom in the U.S. of marrying for love. What do you see as advantages and disadvantages of this custom? p. 45
15. How do you think the growing importance of dowries will effect the attitudes about the birth of girl babies?
16. How is divorce viewed in both Hindu and Muslim societies? How do you think America might be better off if divorce were less common in the U.S.? How would we be worse off? p.50
17. What is the advantage of sending the teenage bride to live with her husband's family? p. 55 What must a young girl do in order to get along with her mother-in-law and others of her husband's relatives?
18. How do marriage customs illustrate that independence is not valued in females in Indian society?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Women's Status p. 56

1. What role did women have in Indian society until 500 B.C. ? p. 56
2. What is the only property a village Hindu woman can own? p. 57
3. According to the laws of Manu who should a Hindu woman be subject to? p. 56
4. What evidence is there in Indian culture that women are valued? List some customs from American society that illustrate that we value women. Can you think of any customs or practices that show that our culture really does not value women? p. 57
5. In what areas are women dominant? How does their limitation to this sphere of dominance contribute to their vulnerability if they are widowed? p. 60
6. In the villages what happens to the mobility of women as their families become more prosperous? p. 61
7. How are the Indian women who participate in politics the exception rather than the rule? How would you compare this to women in politics in the U.S.? **note:** This could be a topic for further research. p. 63
8. What is the Indian practice with regard to public displays of affection? How does this compare to the U.S.? Can you think of problems that have developed in our culture because of public displays of affection especially on TV. and in movies? p. 63
9. What is the definition of a perfect wife in India? What do you think it is in the U.S.? What is your definition of a perfect wife? Ask some of your friends what their definition is. Ask some people of your parents generation what their definition is. How does it compare with yours? Do you think your own definition may change as you get older?
10. Define **sati.**
11. Look up the story of Sita and Ram. How does Sita embody the definition of a perfect wife?

Family Living P. 66

1. Why is it important in Muslim families that a choice of husband be made by the family? p.68
2. What are some of the problems that are created by extended families in India?
3. How do Indian women feel about having children? Why do you think the government has embarked on a policy of limiting the size of families? How would you feel if the government of the U.S. developed a strong policy to limit families to one child? p.72
4. How would you compare the attitudes of Indians towards children with that of people in the U.S.? What would be some of the factors you would consider before deciding to have children of your own? p.76

Traditional Tasks p. 76

1. Identify a woman's principal tasks within the home. Why is getting water seen as a pleasant task? p. 78
2. What kinds of farm duties do some women have? p. 81
3. What kind of work are women found in outside the home? p. 84
4. Why are women in rural India dependent on men? p. 85

New Occupations p. 87

1. How did Ghandi begin to change the attitudes about women working outside the home? p. 88
2. What kind of jobs are women commonly found in India? What similarities do you find between this and the U.S.? p.89
3. What problems faced by middle class working women are illustrated by the movie *Mahamagar*, by Satyajit Ray? What similarities can you see with American working women? As an adult do you expect to be involved in a marriage where both parties work? p. 91

Religion p. 92

1. What do women believe are the limits on rebirth? p. 92
2. In what way is the proportion of religious activity related to women's status vis-a-vis men? p. 93
3. Compare basic differences between Hinduism and Islam for women in India. p. 96

Amusements p. 97

1. What are some of the amusements for Indian women? p. 97
2. What is the difference between "classical dancers" and "dancing girls"? p. 100
3. What kind of traveling are women allowed to do? p. 102

The Older Woman p. 103

1. What privileges does Hirabai enjoy? p. 103
2. In what ways may Indian women throughout their lives have a clearer sense of purpose and identity than American women? p. 105

Nectar in A Sieve
Markandaya

1. What is a dowry? (Look it up)
2. Why does the main character marry a poor farmer? **Because her father's prestige was gone and she had no dowry.** How old is she when she marries? **1 2**
3. What kind of a house does she live in when first married? **Mud Hut**
4. In the early days of her marriage what things did she and her husband have that made her feel prosperous and lucky? **Good store of grain, roof overhead, their own ploughing bullocks, peace and happiness in each other.**

Chapter 2

1. How does it happen that Rukmani is able to read and write? **her father taught her.** What is her mother's attitude towards her learning to read and write? **It is a waste for a girl.** How do others around her react to the fact that she is educated? **Janaki amazed, Kali scornful, her husband accepting.**
2. What is the reaction of Nathan when their first child is a daughter? **Disappointed but more or less indifferent, does not condemn Rukmani.**

Chapter 3

1. How does Rukmani feel when she is not able to get pregnant again right away? **Very worried and inadequate.**
2. What is her first reaction when she meets Kenny? **She is horrified by his looks which are repulsive to her.**
3. How do her friends and family react when her second child is a boy? **Great happiness, plan a big party in celebration.**
4. How does the family's standard of living change when they have more children? **Goes down, forced to sell some of their vegetables, milk only for youngest child, no more curds and butter except on rare occasions.**
5. Why doesn't she want to sell to Biswas? **She dislikes the money lending clas and finds him unfriendly.**

Chapter 4

1. What is a tannery? **Place where leather is tanned and treated.**
2. How are the workers different from the village people? **Workers dress differently, speak differently, are a different religion.**
3. Use the glossary at the back of the book to define Maidan. **Open field**
4. Who is sorry when the workers leave? **The traders were sorry, less business.** How does Rukmani feel? **She is glad, they invaded her village.**
5. What advantage does Janaki see for her sons once the tannery is open? **That ehy can work there because the land would not provide for them all.**
6. Why do Ira and Rudmani begin to put restrictions on their daughter? **They want to find a good husband and if they are not careful she may get a reputation with the men.** How old is their daughter at this time? **1 3**

Chapter 5

1. Who owns the land they work? **Zemindar owned the land they work.**

2. In what ways is Sivaji generous? **He does not extract payment to the last grain they have, he allowed them to keep the gleanings, he did not demand bribes of food and money, he did not claim for himself the dung in the field.**
3. Why should Rukmani and Kali both want to collect the dung? **It is easy to sell for a good price for fuel.**
What does Kenny think should be done with the dung? **It should be left on the land to fertilize it.**
4. When Kenny comes to visit what will be the family's breakfast? **Water that the rice has soaked in.**
What do they feed him as an honored guest? **They feed him rice with salt.**
5. Why is she still nursing her three year old child? **She can't afford to buy milk and her son needs it.**

Chapter 6
1. How is a husband to be chosen for Ira? **Granny will be the marriage go between, she will pick out eligible men and then Rukmani and Nathan will discuss their merits to figure out which one of them will be best suited.**
How old is Ira when the process begins? **1 4**
2. How long has Rukmani been saving to pay for the wedding? **Since Ira was born.**
3. What contact will Ira have with her family after she marries? **She will have little contact.**

Chapter 7
1. Why is the family going hungry when the monsoons come? **There is no harvest and they have no money to buy rice, everyone else in the village is in need and so can't help them.**
2. What did the villagers lose in the monsoon? **Lost homes and belongings.**
3. What do the rice merchants do after the monsoon? **They charge a fortune for the rice because they know the people are desparate and have nowhere to turn.**
4. What is Kenny's response when he meets them and they are going hungry? **He is angry and pessimistic.** Why do you think he reacts this way? **He thinks they are too passive.** What nationality do you think Kenny is? **In his attitudes he seems American.**
What are the clues that he is a foreigner? **He talks like he is not used to the way things are done. He looks different.**
5. How much rice do they get from the paddies? **Two measures of rice.**
What do they get from the flooded paddies besides rice? **fish.**

Chapter 8
1. Compare the feelings of Kunthi and Rukmani about living in a town? **Kunthi likes living in a town because there is more opportunity and she gets more attention from the men who admire her beauty. Rukmani prefers the simple village, doesn't like rudeness of the people and filth of the city.**
2. How does Kunthi behave that causes other people in the village to criticize her? **She goes into town to attract men and acts like a prostitute.**
3. How do the Moslem women differ from the village women? **They appear to have a life of luxury, they have to hide their faces.**
Why does Kali think they are lucky? **Because they do not have to worry about the next meal.**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Chapter 9

1. Why does Ira return to her family? **Her husband no longer wants her because she has not born him any children.**
What is the attitude of her husband and her father? **This is a reasonable thing for the husband to do because a man needs children, sons.**
How does Ira feel about herself? **She is a failure as a woman.** What does she think the other people in the community will think of her? **She believes others in the village will also see her as a failure.**
2. What is Arjun's reason for going to work in the tannery? **He wants to eat more.** How does his mother feel about this decision? **She is not in favor of this decision but she does not stop him.**
3. How does Nathan feel when two of his sons go to work at the tannery? **He feels hurt, he wishes they wanted to help him in the fields.**
4. How did the fact that they had so many children effect the family economically? **They could never get any money ahead to buy their own land.**
5. What is Thambi's feeling about his father's relationship to the land? **He thinks his father is foolish, he does not own the land so there is not much use in working so hard for it and not get much in return.**
6. Why is Rukmani glad that the family will get to keep some of their chilies? **This will give some spice and flavor.** What does this tell you about their diet? **Their diet is monotonous .**
7. Why are the parents saving the clothes they wore at their daughters wedding? **So they won't shame their sons by wearing rags at their weddings.**

Chapter 10

1. Do you think Rukmani was right to spend money on fireworks when they were so poor? Explain your answer? **It could bring joy to her children and a memory of happiness tucked away in a childhood of poverty.**
2. Why do you think the bonfire seems like such a big treat? **No one in their community ever has enough fuel for a large fire.**

Chapter 11

1. Why does Rukmani wait until her husband leaves before taking Ira to Kenny? **She does not want him to know because she feels this Ira's only hope.** What does she hope Kenny will be able to do for her? **Cure her fertility problems.**
2. Why does the future look bleak for Ira? **Her husband will never take her back and no one else will marry her. There will be no place for her in Indian society.**
3. How does Granny's life illustrate what the life of a woman alone will be? **Sitting in the street all day with a gunny sack of vegetables and nuts. She has no sons to provide for her, she is destitute. No one cares about her.**

Chapter 12

1. Why have the sons along with the other workers at the factory asked for more money? **They were not getting enough to live on.**
2. What is the result of the strike for Rukmani's sons? **They are out of work.** How are they like Kenny? **They don't want to be passive.**
3. Why doesn't Rukmani want her sons to go to Ceylon to work? **They will be servants and they will be so farr away.** Why do they go? **There is nothing for they here.**

4. How does Kenny feel about the Indian people he is helping? **They are pitiful and he can only take them in small doses.**

Chapter 13

1. Why do the crops fail that year? **Drought**
2. What does Sivaji demand? **Half of the payment do** Do you think he is unreasonable or unsympathetic?
3. What do they sell in order to try to make the half payment for the land? **mud pots, 2 brass vessels, a tin trunk, two shirts, tow ollocks of Dhal and dried chiles.**
4. Why do they argue about the seed? **Rukmani believes that they should keep it for the next crop while Nathan thinks that they should sell it and buy more when they earn money for it.**
5. How do people behave when the water is rationed? **People are greedy, lie and get jealous. There is discontent and bitter arguments among themselves.**

Chapter 14

1. Why is fear their constant companion? **Fear hunger, despair, the future and death.**
2. What does Kunthi use to blackmail Rukmani? **Rukmani's visits to Kenny.** Why does Rukmani give in to the blackmail? **Afraid to lose her husband, fears he will believe Kunthi.**
3. Once the rice is gone what does the family do for food? **Prickly pear, sweet potatoes others have thrown away, scavenge.**
4. What are the physical effects of starvation? **Sickness, weakness of limbs, difficulty in swallowing, all feeling is gone.**

Chapter 15

1. How did Raja die? **Watchman at factory saw him with an item that was stolen and they hit him as he was trying to escape, he was so weak and brittle it killed him.**
2. Why do officials come from the tannery to talk to Rukmani? **Because they do not want her to demand compensation.**

Chapter 16

1. What does Ira do to save the youngest child? **Prostitution to buy food so he won't starve to death.** How do her parents respond to her decision and choice? **Do not approve but don't try to stop her.** What is your reaction to what she did?
2. How does Rukmani react to her youngest child's death? **Glad that he died because he suffered so much.**

Chapter 17

1. What kind of a harvest do they get that year? **A good one.**

Chapter 18

1. Why is Kenny so bitter about his wife? **She left him and taught his kids to forget him.**
2. What does Rukmani believe Kenny's wife should have done? **She should have accompanied him to India.**
3. Why will this country never be Kenny's home? **He will never be one of them.**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

4. What has happened to Ira? **She is pregnant.** Will she ever have a place in the village society now? **Absolutely not.**

Chapter 19

1. Why is Rukmani puzzled by the idea that foreigners would contribute money to people they do not know? **She doesn't understand why they would help people that are strangers. She does not know that she is in a country in need and has sympathey from people in other parts of the world.** What does this suggest to you about the limits of her understanding? What is her attitude about going without things that you need? **This is part of life and can never be changed.**
2. Why does Kenny call her an "acquiescente imbecile"? **She just stupidly accepts everything that life hands her and doesn't try to fight back.**

Chapter 20

1. How does living in a town force a person to change their outlook on life? **People are forced to change some of their attitudes because of living in a different environment.**
2. What is wrong with Ira's son? **He is an albino.** Why doesn't she seem to notice it? **She loves him so much she can't see that anything might be wrong with him.**
3. What is Kali's reaction to the child? **She is insulted by the very sight of the child and has not pity.** Discuss whether you think her reaction is typical of how the rest of the community will act.
4. How is someone who is visibly different treated in our society here in Bellevue?

Chapter 21

1. How does Granny die? **From starvation.** Why is there no one to take care of her or help her? **She did not have relatives and Indian society has no institutions to take care of people who are poor and alone.** What help can an elderly woman receive in our society today? **Social security, food stamps, Medicare.**
2. Why does it take so long for the hospital to be completed? **There are difficulties and they keep running out of money.** What problems are encountered?
3. What problem does Rukmani see will need to be dealt with once the hospital is complete? **How will there be money to pay staff and supplies to keep it running after it is completed?**

Chapter 22

1. Kali thinks that learning brings trouble. Write a few sentences supporting this idea. **Discord between Rukmani and her sons. Her sons get in trouble with the tannery business.**
2. How is Sacrabani treated by the children of the town? **He was rejected by the children of the town.**

Chapter 23

1. What is Nathan's physical condition at 50 years of age? **He is an old man, suffers from bouts of rheumatism and fever.**
2. What is principal food in their diet? **Rice** What do you think would happen physically to a person who only had this to eat? **Suffer from malnurishment.**

3. What planning have Rukmani and Nathan done for their future? **Plan on their children taking care of them.** Compare them to your own parents what planning and arrangements have they made for their futures? What creates the biggest difference between them?
4. What news does Sivaji bring them? **The tannery wants to buy their land.** Why is this so shocking and frightening? **They expected to live on this land all their lives. They have no idea how to cope with this change.**
5. Why would some people in town be happy about the tannery expanding? **It will provide jobs for their sons to support them.**
6. What does Rukmani believe the tannery has done to her life? **Ruined** it. Do you agree that the blame lies on the tannery? Discuss.
7. Give an example of how she passively accepts whatever happens to her.

Chapter 24
1. Why do you think she feels sad to leave the farm and the village when there has been so much misery for her there? **It is the place where she and her husband shared a life and dreams and raised their children. It was also a place that had hope in it at one time.**
2. What difficulties are they immediately faced with when they reach the city? **They are physically lost and frightened by the crowds and traffic and noises and confusion.**
3. How does the mood of the crowd in the temple change when the food is being handed out? **People become mean and greedy and hurt and push each other.**
4. Why does Rukmani fail when she tries to get food for Nathan? **The officials think she is just trying to get more food for herself and won't give her any extra.**
5. Does the temple provide them with a safe place to rest? **No, people steal from them there.**

Chapter 25
1. What have the children had to learn in order to survive? **Fight and beg and steal to keep from starving.**
2. What distressing news do they learn at the doctor's? **Their son is not there.**

Chapter 26
1. Why can't they stay with their daughter-in-law? **Their son has left and the daughter-in-law can barely support herself and her child.**

Chapter 27
1. What becomes their only source of food? **The handouts at the temple.**
2. Why don't they just return to their village? **They have no money to get there and no land to work if they could get there.**
3. What work does Rukmani finally get? **In a rock quarry.** Why is it difficult for her to do this work? **She is old, weak, malnourished and this is very exhausting work.**
4. What is a quarry? **A place where stone is dug.**
5. How does Puli help them? **He keeps their money for them.** How does he support himself? **By begging.** In what ways is he much more capable than they are? **He is street smart, he knows how to survive in the big city.**

Write a paragraph in which you discuss what you think the future hold for Rukmani and her remaining family.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Nectar in A Sieve
Markandaya

1. What is a dowry? (Look it up)
2. Why does the main character marry a poor farmer?
How old is she when she marries?
3. What kind of a house does she live in when first married?
4. In the early days of her marriage what things did she and her husband have that made her feel prosperous and lucky?

Chapter 2

1. How does it happen that Rukmani is able to read and write?
What is her mother's attitude towards her learning to read and write? How do others around her react to the fact that she is educated?
2. What is the reaction of Nathan when their first child is a daughter?

Chapter 3

1. How does Rukmani feel when she is not able to get pregnant again right away?
2. What is her first reaction when she meets Kenny?
3. How do her friends and family react when her second child is a boy?
4. How does the family's standard of living change when they have more children?
5. Why doesn't she want to sell to Biswas?

Chapter 4

1. What is a tannery?
2. How are the workers different from the village people?
3. Use the glossary at the back of the book to define Maidan.
4. Who is sorry when the workers leave?
How does Rukmani feel?
5. What advantage does Janaki see for her sons once the tannery is open?
6. Why do Ira and Rudmani begin to put restrictions on their daughter?
How old is their daughter at this time?

Chapter 5

1. Who owns the land they work?
2. In what ways is Sivaji generous?
3. Why should Rukmani and Kali both want to collect the dung?
What does Kenny think should be done with the dung?
4. When Kenny comes to visit what will be the family's breakfast?
What do they feed him as an honored guest?
5. Why is she still nursing her three year old child?

Chapter 6

1. How is a husband to be chosen for Ira?
How old is Ira when the process begins?
2. How long has Rukmani been saving to pay for the wedding?
3. What contact will Ira have with her family after she marries?

Chapter 7

1. Why is the family going hungry when the monsoons come?
2. What did the villagers lose in the monsoon?
3. What do the rice merchants do after the monsoon?

4. What is Kenny's response when he meets them and they are going hungry? Why do you think he reacts this way? What nationality do you think Kenny is? What are the clues that he is a foreigner?
5. How much rice do they get from the paddies?
What do they get from the flooded paddies besides rice?

Chapter 8

1. Compare the feelings of Kunthi and Rukmani about living in a town?
2. How does Kunthi behave that causes other people in the village to criticize her?
3. How do the Moslem women differ from the village women?
Why does Kali think they are lucky?

Chapter 9

1. Why does Ira return to her family?
What is the attitude of her husband and her father?
How does Ira feel about herself? What does she think the other people in the community will think of her?
2. What is Arjun's reason for going to work in the tannery? How does his mother feel about this decision?
3. How does Nathan feel when two of his sons go to work at the tannery?
4. How did the fact that they had so many children effect the family economically?
5. What is Thambi's feeling about his father's relationship to the land?
6. Why is Rukmani glad that the family will get to keep some of their chilies? What does this tell you about their diet?
7. Why are the parents saving the clothes they wore at their daughters wedding?

Chapter 10

1. Do you think Rukmani was right to spend money on fireworks when they were so poor? Explain your answer?
2. Why do you think the bonfire seems like such a big treat?

Chapter 11

1. Why does Rukmani wait until her husband leaves before taking Ira to Kenny? What does she hope Kenny will be able to do for her?
2. Why does the future look bleak for Ira?
3. How does Granny's life illustrate what the life of a woman alone will be?

Chapter 12

1. Why have the sons along with the other workers at the factory asked for more money?
2. What is the result of the strike for Rukmani's sons? How are they like Kenny?
3. Why doesn't Rukmani want her sons to go to Ceylon to work? Why do they go?
4. How does Kenny feel about the Indian people he is helping?

Chapter 13

1. Why do the crops fail that year?
2. What does Sivaji demand? Do you think he is unreasonable or unsympathetic?
3. What do they sell in order to try to make the half payment for the land?
4. Why do they argue about the seed?
5. How do people behave when the water is rationed?

Chapter 14

1. Why is fear their constant companion?
2. What does Kunthi use to blackmail Rukmani? Why does Rukmani give in to the blackmail?
3. Once the rice is gone what does the family do for food?
4. What are the physical effects of starvation?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Chapter 15
1. How did Raja die?
2. Why do officials come from the tannery to talk to Rukmani?

Chapter 16
1. What does Ira do to save the youngest child?
How do her parents respond to her decision and choice? What is your reaction to what she did?
2. How does Rukmani react to her youngest child's death?

Chapter 17
1. What kind of a harvest do they get that year?

Chapter 18
1. Why is Kenny so bitter about his wife?
2. What does Rukmani believe Kenny's wife should have done?
3. Why will this country never be Kenny's home?
4. What has happened to Ira? Will she ever have a place in the village society now?

Chapter 19
1. Why is Rukmani puzzled by the idea that foreigners would contribute money to people they do not know? What does this suggest to you about the limits of her understanding?
What is her attitude about going without things that you need?
2. Why does Kenny call her an "acquiescente imbecile"?

Chapter 20
1. How does living in a town force a person to change their outlook on life?
2. What is wrong with Ira's son? Why doesn't she seem to notice it?
3. What is Kali's reaction to the child? Discuss whether you think her reaction is typical of how the rest of the community will act.
4. How is someone who is visibly different treated in our society here in Bellevue?

Chapter 21
1. How does Granny die? Why is there no one to take care of her or help her? What help can an elderly woman receive in our society today?
2. Why does it take so long for the hospital to be completed? What problems are encountered?
3. What problem does Rukmani see will need to be dealt with once the hospital is complete?

Chapter 22
1. Kali thinks that learning brings trouble. Write a few sentences supporting this idea.
2. How is Sacrabani treated by the children of the town?

Chapter 23
1. What is Nathan's physical condition at 50 years of age?
2. What is principal food in their diet? What do you think would happen physically to a person who only had this to eat?
3. What planning have Rukmani and Nathan done for their future? Compare them to your own parents what planning and arrangements have they made for their futures? What creates the biggest difference between them?
4. What news does Sivaji bring them? Why is this so shocking and frightening?
5. Why would some people in town be happy about the tannery expanding?
6. What does Rukmani believe the tannery has done to her life? Do you agree that the blame lies on the tannery? Discuss.
7. Give an example of how she passively accepts whatever happens to her.

Chapter 24
1. Why do you think she feels sad to leave the farm and the village when there has been so much misery for her there?
2. What difficulties are they immediately faced with when they reach the city?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

3. How does the mood of the crowd in the temple change when the food is being handed out?
4. Why does Rukmani fail when she tries to get food for Nathan?
5. Does the temple provide them with a safe place to rest?

Chapter 25

1. What have the children had to learn in order to survive?
2. What distressing news do they learn at the doctor's?

Chapter 26

1. Why can't they stay with their daughter-in-law?

Chapter 27

1. What becomes their only source of food?
2. Why don't they just return to their village?
3. What work does Rukmani finally get? Why is it difficult for her to do this work?
4. What is a quarry?
5. How does Puli help them? How does he support himself? In what ways is he much more capable than they are?

Write a paragraph in which you discuss what you think the future hold for Rukmani and her remaining family.

JASMINE
MUKERJEE

Jasmine's story takes place in three geographic locations, Hasnapur, India, New York and Iowa. Identify the name Jasmine uses in each place and who the principal people are in her life in each place and what their relationship is to her.
Jane in Iowa - Bud Ripplemeyer, Du, Darrell. Jyoti at birth - mother, father, family, husband.

Chapter 1

1. What does the astrologer predict for her future?
   widowhood and exile

Chapter 2

1. What are some of the characteristics of farmers in the Midwest of the U.S.?
   not impulsive, modest, conservative.
2. Why does Jasmine say she saved Bud's life by not marrying him?
   the astrologer predicted her widowhood, by not marrying him he didn't die.
3. What did the girl in Vilma do when she was widowed at the age of 22? **committed suicide** Why did she do it? **Her husband died.** How would this action be viewed in Vilma? **Not a sad story.** In the U.S.? **It would be terrible.**
4. Why is Jasmine careful about the stories she tells Mother Ripplemeyer? **stories make her uncomfortable.**
5. Who is Du and where did he come from? **Vietnamese orphan they adopted.**
6. What does Darrell want to do with his farm? **Sell it to make a golf course.**

Chapter 3

1. Why is Darrell feeling resentful of Bud? **Thinks Bud is trying to be his father, won't let Darrell do what he wants to do with the farm, doesn't trust him.**

Chapter 4

INS stands for Immigration and Naturalization Service.

1. How does Jasmine feel when the illegal Mexican immigrants are shown being arrested on TV? **She feels sympathy for them, feels legal Americans don't understand.**
2. What does Jasmine mean when she thinks "We are all a quick study when we start letting go?" **Once we give up pieces of our original identity we lose more very fast.**
3. Why is Jasmine shocked when Mr. Skola, Du's history teacher, tries to speak some Vietnamese to him? **Mr. Skola could only have learned it as a soldier in Vietnam which might mean he was killing Du's people.**
4. What does owning things mean to Du? **owning is rebellion, not sharing, survival.**

Chapter 5

1. How do different people in America deal with the fact that Jasmine is "different"? **Educated people are interested, to farmers alien knowlege means intelligence, other caregivers assumed she was like them.**

Chapter 6

1. What is the difference in reaction to the birth of a son and the birth of a daughter in India? **Daughters are a curse, sons a celebration.** Define **dowry**.
2. What did Jasmine's mother try to do to her at her birth? **Strangle her.** Why? **Save her the fate of a dowryless woman.** Does Jasmine seem accepting of this? **Acceptance of her**

fate, she knows how unwelcome her birth must have been.
3. What kind of a student was Jasmine? Very good. Why is this ironic for a girl in her situation? Waste of brains on a girl who will have no chance to use them.
4. How well off was her family in Lahore? Rich Why did they leave? Country is partitioned, Muslims come and take their belongings.
5. How has Jasmine's father adapted to being forced to live out the rest of his life away from Lahore? He lives in the past with memories. What does Jasmine think about his choice? She thinks he is foolish to give up this life for memories of what is gone.

Chapter 7
What is her mother called? Mataji
What is her father called? Pitaji
What is the school teacher's name? Masterji
What relation is Dida? Pitaji's mother, Jyoti's grandmother.
1. During Jasmine's childhood what changes come to her village? Electricity, TV.
2. According to the village match maker why do city men prefer village girls for wives? No minds of their own, like cattle, go whatever way you lead them.
3. How much education does Jasmine get? 6 years. How do various members of her family feel about how smart she is? Brothers proud of her, father thinks it is a waste. Grandmother doesn't like it.
4. How old is Jasmine when a husband is first found for her? 12 Why is it considered a good match? Man a widower with 3 children and his father is rich.
5. Look up Sikh in the dictionary. Of what religion is that a branch? What religion is Jasmine and her family? A member of a 'Hindu religious sect, founded in the Punjab c.1500 by the guru Nanar as a reformed offshoot of Hinduism, refusing to recognize the caste system or the supremacy of the Brahminical priests and forbidding magic, idolatry and pilgrimages.
6. What are Jasmine's dreams for herself? She wants to be a Dr. and set up her own clinic. What is her father's reaction? He thinks she is mad. What does her father want her to do? Quit school, marry and have sons.
7. What does Jasmine mean when she says her mother loved her so much she tried to kill her? Her mother wants her to achieve outside the role of women in that society which could be fatal for Jasmine.

Chapter 8
1. What does the incident with the mad dog tell you about Jasmine's character? She can be very brave.

Chapter 9
1. How does Jasmine explain her father's death to Taylor, the friend she meets in New York? The lord sends us down with an assignment and lends us a body. Once the assignment is done we are called home. Maybe my father's assignment was to hasten my eloping with Prakash.
How is this different from the traditional Christian, American view of death?
2. What is Jasmine's mother's reaction to her husband's death? Wants to die on his funeral pyre.

Chapter 10
1. Who are the Sikh nationalists? Khalsa Lions, Making bombs terrorists acts. What religious group do they want to force to move or they will destroy them? Hindus.

2 What are some of Sukkhi's extreme ideas? **Impure must be eliminated. Keep your whorish women off the streets.** Pay attention to the character of Sukkhi. He becomes very important later in the story. **Extremist.**
3. What two groups in India seem to be having armed clashes? **Hindu - Sikhs**
4. What makes Jasmine fall in love the Prakash? **Deep voice, unfooled, ambitious, has plans.**

Chapter 11
1. Why did her father want them to have a window in their house? **to live windowless is to live as an insect.**
2. Why is the meeting with Prakash so elaborately arranged? **Just because she doesn't have adowry doesn't mean she is without hope. Marriages are arranged indirectly in India.**

Chapter 12
1. What were the circumstances of Jasmine's wedding? **No guest, no dowry, registry wedding.**
2. What are the marriage traditions that Vilma accused them of not keeping? **Letting traditions crumble.**
Discuss the problems that can arise when a culture begins letting go of old traditions.
3. What is the difference between Prakash and his uncle in their view of love? **They don't live with his uncle in extended family.** What are Jasmine's ideas about love? **obeying her husband, having children.**
4. What is Prakash idea about what their future should be like?**Both free to make decisions.** What traditions of Indian society is he refusing to accept? **No children immediately.** What American marriage customs have changed in the last 10 or 15 years?
5. Jasmine talks about her belief that wives should be obedient to their husbands and daughters to their fathers. How do you think most people in America today view the role of the relationship of wives and husbands? What is your view?
6. Why do you think Jasmine is so anxious to become a mother at such a young age?
In America today what are the advantages and disadvantages of becoming a mother while still a teenager? What are the disadvantages? Why do some women wait until they are in their 30s to have children?
7. What is Prakash's hope about America? **He would have many opportunities.**
8. What happens to Masterji, Jasmine's former teacher? **He was tormented and shot by a group of boys.**

Chapter 13
1. What terrorist group is committing crimes in their little town? **Khalsa Lions**
2. Where does Prakash get accepted to go to school in the U.S.? **Florida International School of Technology.** What does he need to do before he can go to the U.S.? **Visa, money.**
3. How does Prakash die? By a terrorist bomb. **Sukki. Sukhwinder**

Chapter 14
1. Use the dictionary to look up the definition of an Untouchable in India. What is it?
2. What is Jasmine's role in life now that she is a widow? **Living with her mother.**
3. Why won't her young friend come and see her? **Afraid of her bad luck**
4. Who does Dida, her grandmother, blame for what has happened to Jasmine? **She blames Jasmine and the Muslims for forcing them to leave Lahore.**

Chapter 15

1. What does Jasmine mean when she says "The zigzag route is the straightest."? **Because she is traveling illegally she has to take detours.**
2. How is the route of those traveling illegally different from how a tourist would travel? **Sitting in corners, unscheduled airlines, not going through customs.**

Chapter 16

1. What kind of a person is Half Face? **Not to be trusted**
2. Why do you think he offers Jasmine a ride after they have reached the U.S.? **He wants to use her for his own purposes, rape.**

Chapter 17

1. When Half Face takes her to the motel he says, " You are entering of your own will. No coercion involved." What is he trying to establish here? **That whatever happens to her she cooperated.** What is he obviously planning to do? **Rape**

Do you really feel at this point that Jasmine has any other choice but to go with him?

2. How does Half Face feel about Jasmine?**Just an object to be used. He thinks Asia the armpit of the world.** What does he threaten her with?**Give me any grief your dead meat.**
3. Why has Jasmine carried her husband's suit all this way? **To burn it at University.**
4. Why does Jasmine cut her tongue? **She wants to make some kind of a sacrifice.** What hau she originally planned to do to herself? **Committ suicide.**

Discuss whether you think what she did to Half Face was justified? **Is murder justified?** What other actions could she have taken?

5. Why hadn't Jasmine done any planning about how she would survive in America? **She didn't expect to live.**
6. Why has her mission changed? **Half face has dishonored her mission.**

Chapter 18

1. What is Dr. Mary Webb talking about when she mentions "channeling"? **Contacting spirits.**
2. Define reincarnation. Does Jasmine believe in it?
3. On page 127 Jasmine talks about all the different identities she feels she has had. What are those identities and what did each of them experience? **Jyoti was the feudal village girl, Jasmine was the young wife, Jasmine was an au pair in New York, Jane is a wife in Iowa.**

Do you feel your life has been consistent and fits together all in one piece or have you experienced shatterting life changes like Jasmine has?

4. What help does Lillian Gordon give Jasmine? **Food, a place to stay, doctor,.**
5. What is Lillian's attitude toward the past? **Can't let it cripple you.**

Why do you think she helps Jasmine?

6. In what way do shoes tell which people are recent immigrants? **high heels.**
7. In what physical ways does Lillian help Jasmine to change? **Change the way she walks.**

Chapter 19

1. What does Lillian represent to Jasmine? **Goodness, freedom, hope.**
2. Discuss how you feel about what Lillian did. Do you think it was right for her to help illegal aliens stay in this country? Do you think she was "exploiting these people? Would you be brave enough to go to jail for something you believed in? Do you think the government was ight to prosecute her and send her to jail?

3. What happens to the Flaming Hotel and the house that Lillian lived in? **Being developed into tourest cottages.** For Jasmine how is this change characteristic of America? **hell turned into paradise.**
4. Why does the incident with the beggar in New York shock Jasmine? **She is surprised there are beggars in America.**
5. Where is the cab driver on her first cab ride from? **India.** What job did he have in his own country? **Doctor.**

Chapter 20
1. While Jasmine is living with the Professoriji in New York why is it that she is in danger of losing her ability to speak english? **Family only speaks Hindi.**
2. What is a ghetto? **Area isolated from others.** Why does Jasmine say the professor and Nirmala were living in a ghetto? **Only contact with Indians.**
3. As a widow within the Indian community what are Jasmine's prospects? **Not good.**
4. Why does the Professor's mother feel disappointed with life in America? **She doesn't have power over her daughter-in-law, no grandchildren.**
5. What job does the Professor lead everyone to believe that he has? **A Professor at a college.** What work does he actually do? **Sorts and sells hair for wigs.**
6. Discuss whether you think the Professor is really trying to create a new life for himself in America. Give specific examples from the book to support your position. **You must do this question.**

Chapter 21
1. Why does Jasmine say that Du is the child she and Prakash should have had? **Because he is clever and ingenious the way Prakash was.**
2. What are the similarities of experience that draw Jasmine and Du together? **Both survivors, both killed a man.**
3. Why do you think farmers are so angry at bankers? **farming has been bad and bankers are foreclosing on loans.**

Chapter 22
1. In what way does Jasmine feel she and Kate's pet the lizard Sam are alike? **They are both far from their birth world and they have changed.**

Chapter 23
1. What are some of Jasmine's reactions to meeting Taylor and Wylie? **She falls in love with them and feels welcome and curious.**
2. How does Jasmine feel about the idea of adoption? **Thinks it is a horrible idea.**
3. Jasmine talks about wanting to change herself into the person Taylor and Wylie see. What is their image of Jasmine? **smart, clever, refined affectionate.** What is her own image of herself? **a murdered, widowed, raped.**
4. Jasmine does not feel like a servant with Wylie and Taylor, how does she feel? **She is a caregiver.**
5. How does Jasmine describe her three different selves in this chapter? **Jyoti a sati goddess who burned herself. Jasmine lived for the future, Jase lived for today.** Have you ever had anything happen to you in your life that has changed your sense of your own identity?
6. What new employment opportunities is Jasmine given when she is working for Taylor and Wylie? **answering phones at Columbia.**

7. Why does Jasmine have a hard time understanding Wylie's concept of happiness? **She thinks Wylie has everything that should make her happy.**
8. Why does Jasmine leave New York? **She thinks she sees the man who killed her husband.** Do you think she made the right decision? How does Taylor feel about her decision? **He thinks it is a mistake.**

Chapter 24

1. What were some of the clues that Jasmine missed when Harlan Kroener came to kill Bud? **He had a rifle, no expression, Bud tells her to call the sheriff.**
Do you think she was to blame for not understanding?
2. How did Bud's first sight of Jasmine differ from the image he was expecting? **She was beautiful, he was expecting someone dark skinned and starving.**
3. What is the difference between a catalyst and a cause? **She didn't make Bud dissatified with Karen she was just the spark that caused him to leave.**
4. Why does Karin see Jasmine as a tornado? **Because she came to Baden and left destruction behind her.** Does Jasmine see herself that way? **Jasmine sees herself as passive.**
5. What is happening to the farmers in Iowa? **Drought has brought bad times to the farmers.** Why do they blame people like Bud? **They need someone to blame.**
6. What is the difference between the way Jasmine feels about Bud and the way she feels about Taylor? **She feels safe with Bud, duty and prudence count. She really loves Taylor.**

Chapter 25

1. What has Du survived? **Many countries, languages, seeing his family butchered, eating filth.**
2. What does Darrell want from Jasmine? **He loves her and wants her to leave with him.**How does he feel about Bud? **He is to blame for all his problems.**

Chapter 26

1. Describe the mixed feelings Jasmine has when Du leaves? **She wants him to stay because he is an outsider like she is, she understand why he wants to leave to go to the only sister he has left, she knows he's right when he says Bud doesn't really love him.**
2. Why do you think Du is leaving? **He is going to be with family and some kind of Vietnamese community.** Du you think his life will be easier or harder when he gets where he is going? **Probably harder financially.**
3. What kind of secrets has Du kept from Jasmine? **The ties he has formed with some Vietnamese in Baden.**
4. Why does Darrell frighten Jasmine? **He loves Jaamine and is jealous of Bud, he hates Bud because he is trying to control what Darrell does with the farm, he seems out of control.**
5. What is the way of life that Jasmine sees coming to an end in Iowa? **A way of life, small town innocence.** What changes do you see happening in the society you live in?
6. Why does Jasmine make the final choice that she does? **I'm not leaving Bud, I'm going somewhere, doesn't feel guilt feels relief, she is an adventurer, risk taker, transformer.** Discuss how you feel about her choice.

JASMINE
MUKERJEE

Jasmine's story takes place in three geographic locations, Hasnapur, India, New York and Iowa. Identify the name Jasmine uses in each place and who the principal people are in her life in each place and what their relationship is to her.

Chapter 1

1. What does the astrologer predict for her future?

Chapter 2

1. What are some of the characteristics of farmers in the Midwest of the U.S.?
2. Why does Jasmine say she saved Bud's life by not marrying him?
3. What did the girl in Vilma do when she was widowed at the age of 22? Why did she do it? How would this action be viewed in Vilma? In the U.S.?
4. Why is Jasmine careful about the stories she tells Mother Ripplemeyer?
5. Who is Du and where did he come from?
6. What does Darrell want to do with his farm?

Chapter 3

1. Why is Darrell feeling resentful of Bud?

Chapter 4

INS stands for Immigration and Naturalization Service.

1. How does Jasmine feel when the illegal Mexican immigrants are shown being arrested on TV?
2. What does Jasmine mean when she thinks "We are all a quick study when we start letting go?"
3. Why is Jasmine shocked when Mr. Skola, Du's history teacher, tries to speak some Vietnamese to him?
4. What does owning things mean to Du?

Chapter 5

1. How do different people in America deal with the fact that Jasmine is "different"?

Chapter 6

1. What is the difference in reaction to the birth of a son and the birth of a daughter in India? Define **dowry**.
2. What did Jasmine's mother try to do to her at her birth? Why? Does Jasmine seem accepting of this?
3. What kind of a student was Jasmine? Why is this ironic for a girl in her situation?
4. How well off was her family in Lahore? Why did they leave?
5. How has Jasmine's father adapted to being forced to live out the rest of his life away from Lahore? What does Jasmine think about his choice?

Chapter 7

1. What is her mother called? What is her father called? What is the school teacher's name? What relation is Dida?

2. During Jasmine's childhood what changes come to her village?
3. According to the village match maker why do city men prefer village girls for wives?
4. How much education does Jasmine get? How do various members of her family feel about how smart she is?
5 How old is Jasmine when a husband is first found for her? Why is it considered a good match?
6. Look up Sikh in the dictionary. Of what religion is that a branch? What religion is Jasmine and her family?
7. What are Jasmine's dreams for herself? What is her father's reaction? What does her father want her to do?
8. What does Jasmine mean when she says her mother loved her so much she tried to kill her?

Chapter 8
1. What does the incident with the mad dog tell you about Jasmine's character?

Chapter 9
1. How does Jasmine explain her father's death to Taylor, the friend she meets in New York? How is this different from the traditional Christian, American view of death?
2. What is Jasmine's mother's reaction to her husband's death?

Chapter 10
1. Who are the Sikh nationalists? What religious group do they want to force to move or they will destroy them?
2 What are some of Sukkhi's extreme ideas? Pay attention to the character of Sukkhi. He becomes very important later in the story.
3. What two groups in India seem to be having armed clashes?
4. What makes Jasmine fall in love the Prakash?

Chapter 11
1. Why did her father want them to have a window in their house?
2. Why is the meeting with Prakash so elaborately arranged?

Chapter 12
1. What were the circumstances of Jasmine's wedding?
2. What are the marriage traditions that Vilma accused them of not keeping? Discuss the problems that can arise when a culture begins letting go of old traditions.
3. What is the difference between Prakash and his uncle in their view of love? What are Jasmine's ideas about love?
4. What is Prakash idea about what their future should be like? What traditions of Indian society is he refusing to accept? What American marriage customs have changed in the last 10 or 15 years?
5. Jasmine talks about her belief that wives should be obedient to their husbands and daughters to their fathers. How do you think most people in America today view the role of the relationship of wives and husbands? What is your view?
6. Why do you think Jasmine is so anxious to become a mother at such a young age? In America today what are the advantages and disadvantages of becoming a mother while still a teenager? What are the disadvantages? Why do some women wait until they are in their 30s to have children?
7. What is Prakash's hope about America?
8. What happens to Masterji, Jasmine's former teacher?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Chapter 13

1. What terrorist group is committing crimes in their little town?
2. Where does Prakash get accepted to go to school in the U.S.? What does he need to do before he can go to the U.S.?
3. How does Prakash die?

Chapter 14

1. Use the dictionary to look up the definition of an Untouchable in India. What is it?
2. What is Jasmine's role in life now that she is a widow?
3. Why won't her young friend come and see her?
4. Who does Dida, her grandmother, blame for what has happened to Jasmine?

Chapter 15

1. What does Jasmine mean when she says "The zigzag route is the straightest."?
2. How is the route of those traveling illegally different from how a tourist would travel?

Chapter 16

1. What kind of a person is Half Face?
2. Why do you think he offers Jasmine a ride after they have reached the U.S.?

Chapter 17

1. When Half Face takes her to the motel he says, " You are entering of your own will. No coercion involved." What is he trying to establish here? What is he obviously planning to do? Do you really feel at this point that Jasmine has any other choice but to go with him?
2. How does Half Face feel about Jasmine? What does he threaten her with?
3. Why has Jasmine carried her husband's suit all this way?
4. Why does Jasmine cut her tongue? What had she originally planned to do to herself? Discuss whether you think what she did to Half Face was justified? What other actions could she have taken?
5. Why hadn't Jasmine done any planning about how she would survive in America?
6. Why has her mission changed?

Chapter 18

1. What is Dr. Mary Webb talking about when she mentions "channeling"?
2. Define reincarnation. Does Jasmine believe in it?
3. On page 114 Jasmine talks about all the different identities she feels she has had. What are those identities and what did each of them experience?
Do you feel your life has been consistent and fits together all in one piece or have you experienced shatterting life changes like Jasmine has?
4. What help does Lillian Gordon give Jasmine?
5. What is Lillian's attitude toward the past?
Why do you think she helps Jasmine?
6. In what way do shoes tell which people are recent immigrants?
7. In what physical ways does Lillian help Jasmine to change?

Chapter 19

1. What does Lillian represent to Jasmine?
2. Discuss how you feel about what Lillian did. Do you think it was right for her to help illegal aliens stay in this country? Do you think she was "exploiting these people? Would you be brave enough to go to jail for something you believed in? Do you think the government was ight to prosecute her and send her to jail?
3. What happens to the Flaming Hotel and the house that Lillian lived in? For Jasmine how is this change characteristic of America?
4. Why does the incident with the beggar in New York shock Jasmine?
5. Where is the cab driver on her first cab ride from? What job did he have in his own country?

Chapter 20

1. While Jasmine is living with the Professoriji in New York why is it that she is in danger of losing her ability to speak english?
2. What is a ghetto? Why does Jasmine say the professor and Nirmala were living in a ghetto?
3. As a widow within the Indian community what are Jasmine's prospects?
4. Why does the Professor's mother feel disappointed with life in America?
5. What job does the Professor lead everyone to believe that he has? What work does he actually do?
6. Discuss whether you think the Professor is really trying to create a new life for himself in America. Give specific examples from the book to support your position. **You must do this question.**

Chapter 21

1. Why does Jasmine say that Du is the child she and Prakash should have had?
2. What are the similarities of experience that draw Jasmine and Du together?
3. Why do you think farmers are so angry at bankers?

Chapter 22

1. In what way does Jasmine feel she and Kate's pet the lizard Sam are alike?

Chapter 23

1. What are some of Jasmine's reactions to meeting Taylor and Wylie?
2. How does Jasmine feel about the idea of adoption?
3. Jasmine talks about wanting to change herself into the person Taylor and Wylie see. What is their image of Jasmine? What is her own image of herself?
4. Jasmine does not feel like a servant with Wylie and Taylor, how does she feel?
5. How does Jasmine describe her three different selves in this chapter? Have you ever had anything happen to you in your life that has changed your sense of your own identity?
6. What new employment opportunities is Jasmine given when she is working for Taylor and Wylie?
7. Why does Jasmine have a hard time understanding Wylie's concept of happiness?
8. Why does Jasmine leave New York? Do you think she made the right decision? How does Taylor feel about her decision?

Chapter 24

1. What were some of the clues that Jasmine missed when Harlan Kroener came to kill Bud? Do you think she was to blame for not understanding?
2. How did Bud's first sight of Jasmine differ from the image he was expecting?
3. What is the difference between a catalyst and a cause?
4. Why does Karin see Jasmine as a tornado? Does Jasmine see herself that way?
5. What is happening to the farmers in Iowa? Why do they blame people like Bud?
6. What is the difference between the way Jasmine feels about Bud and the way she feels about Taylor?

Chapter 25

1. What has Du survived?
2. What does Darrell want from Jasmine? How does he feel about Bud?

Chapter 26

1. Describe the mixed feelings Jasmine has when Du leaves?
2. Why do you think Du is leaving? Du you think his life will be easier or harder when he gets where he is going?
3. What kind of secrets has Du kept from Jasmine?
4. Why does Darrell frighten Jasmine?
5. What is the way of life that Jasmine sees coming to an end in Iowa? What changes do you see happening in the society you live in?
6. Why does Jasmine make the final choice that she does? Discuss how you feel about her choice.

MAY YOU BE THE MOTHER OF A HUNDRED SONS
ELIZABETH BUMILLER

CHAPTER 1
ARRIVAL AND INTRODUCTION

1. What are some of the contradictions that confront Bumiller in her first experience of New Delhi? **Ancient city, but modern buildings, all kinds of smells, colors, people and animals, sensory overload.**
2. Why doesn't she want to write a book about women in India? **She is sensitive about her status as a woman who followed her husband to India, her own feminism is unformed, conventional belief in equal rights, right to have a careers**
3. What causes her to become more interested in women's issues? **Bride burnings, college girls who expected to marry strangers chosen by their parents. She realizes women are the window into the very issues she is interested in.**
4. How is the birth of a girl viewed in Indian culture? **As a curse.** Discuss how you think parents in the U.S. feel at the birth of a girl. Have you ever heard someone say they wanted a boy to carry on the family name? Do you think many women in the U.S. would choose to have an abortion if they knew the fetus was a female?
5. What is the life style of 75% of the women of India like? **They are poor, illiterate, live in villages own no property, usually a field worker making half as much as a man, still doing all the work at home.**
6. What are the tasks involved in making every meal? **Hauling water, harvesting and grinding wheat, gathering dung for fuel to cook.**
7. Why are girl children less likely to survive the first year than boys? **Girls are given less food and care than boys are.**
8. According to the World Bank what is the condition of women around the world? **They do two thirds of the work for one tenth the pay, they are the poorest of the poor.** Can you think of any ways in America that women are discriminated against?
9. What is purdah? **Keeping women totally in the house, proves a man is prosperous.** If you had always been in Purdah how do you think the outside world would seem to you?
10. At what period in Indian history were women better off than they are now? **2000 years ago under the Aryans.** Does this tell you anything about patterns in history?
11. Why do you think the reformers were opposed to purdah, sati and child marriage? **They gave men so much power over women.**
12. What was Gandhi's view of women? **He believed women to be autonomous individuals, but they should not be principal wage earners.**
13. What problem is faced by any foreigner trying to write about India? **What standards to use to judge it by?** How do you think some foreigners, the Japanese for example, might view American teenagers?
14. In trying to understand women in India why does the author feel she has come to the center? **Because the way Indian women live is the way most of the women in the world live, it is American women who are odd.**

CHAPTER 2
WEDDING FIRST, LOVE LATER

This chapter has some very specific discussion of sexual problems. Teachers should read it first and decide if it is appropriate for their students.

1. What is your reaction to the title of this chapter?
2. How common is arranged marriage in India? **About 95%** List what you would consider to be the advantages of an arranged marriage. Why do some educated Indians argue that there system is better than ours? **People marry within caste so will have similar background. Love means long**

BEST COPY AVAIL

term commitment. How do Americans define love? **Passion which wears off.**
3. Describe the view these Indian women have about marriage and compare it to your own. **They have not dated, they don't expect passion, they have been taught since birth that their parents can make a better choice than they can, they believe they will grow to love their spouse.** Do any of these ideas sound better to you than the marriage customs in America (which includes a 50% divorce rate and living with people before marrying them.
4. What major family change has taken place when the marriage is concluded? **The bride is no longer a member of birth family, she is now a member of her husband's family.**
5. How is remarriage after a divorce treated differently for men than for women? **A man can remarry a woman is unlikely to.**

CHAPTER 3
FLAMES
1. Look up the definition for **sati.**
2. What is the message of the story of Sita? **She threw herself into a fire because her husband had rejected her as damaged and impure. The gods saved her proving her innocence.**
3. How are Indian women raised to see fire? **As an escape from a miserable marriage or an act of courage and religious inspiration?**
4. What are the two differing accounts of what happened to Surinder Kaur? **She claims her husband doused her with kerosine and her sister-in-law lit the match. They claim she set herself on fire because she was unhappy in her marriage.**
5. What is believed to be the usual reason for bride burnings? **An insufficient dowry.**
6. How does increased education contribute to the increase of the dowry problem? **College educated men think they are worth more dowry gifts.**
7. How does the author influence you to think that bride burning is common? **She say s many of the cases in the burn ward of the hospital are bride burnings.** Does she give you any solid evidence of bride burning? **No**
8. What were some of the problems Surinder experienced in her early marriage? **Her husband's family thought her dowry inadequate, she was light colored and other women were jealous, her husband having affairs.**
9. What are some of the differences between Surinder's story and Manjit? **Disagree about her lack of dowry, he worked hard but she was always complaining, she believed he was having an affair with his sister, he said he thought she was having an affair with her uncle. He says she threatened to kill their daughter.**
10. Why does the author begin to think perhaps this case is not about dowry? **Surinder didn't mention it in her first statement to police and dowry burnings usually happen soon after the marriage not four years later.**
11. What does Bumiller finally conclude about the case? **That maybe the husband and sister are not guilty, she thinks Surinder is devious.** From this case can we conclude how serious an issue bride burning is in India? **No**
12. What are the two versions of the Roop Kanwar story? **1. She willingly sat on her husband's funeral pyre and burned to death. 2. She was forced onto the pyre and was murdered.**
13. How did the general public in the area where it happened respond? **She became a goddess and people made pilgrimages to the spot.**
14. When we first read about Sati two thousand years ago what would a young widow be saved from by committing sati? **Abuse by her in-laws.**
15. How do the women at the festival feel about the sati? **They think she was brave and wonderful.** How does her father feel? **There is grandeur in her death.**
16. In what ways does Roop come from what we would consider a modern environment? **She and her husband were educated, the village was literate, houses of brick and cement, electricity, piped water and TVs.**

17. According to Sushil Kumari how are Indian women taught to feel about their husbands? **They are god figures, no matter what your husband is like you should never think of leaving him.**
18. What is your response to the American woman who criticizes them for taking a weird event and sensationalizing it?
19. What new story about the sati began to be reported in the English language papers? **That Roop had been coerced.**
20. What does the author see both these controversies as symbolizing? **The lack of control women have over there own lives.**

CHAPTER 4
BEYOND THE VEIL
Note: The Panchayat is the elected village council and the pradhan is the leader of that. Women vote and there are places reserved for women on the panchayat but village women often do not know this.

1. Statistically why is it important to Bumiller to live in a village? **Life in the village represents a huge portion of the human experience of India. 3/4 of population live in villages.**
2. How is living in a village different from just visiting it? **It allows you to build up trust with the villagers, to really get a sense of how they think and feel.**
3. What were the different kinds of work done by women depending on caste? **Upper caste confined to house, many demanding and physically difficult tasks there, poor women free to leave house but work in the fields as well as all the housework and child care.**
4. In what way is Asha Devi a prisoner? **She can only go out once or twice a year, she spends 16 hours a day waiting on her husband's family. She eats after everyone else has eaten.**
5. How does she characterize most Indian villages? **Depressing collections of shacks plagued by dust and disease, open sewage and flies.**
6. How powerful is caste in village life? **It is everything, it will predetermine the course of your life.**
7. Even though Bumiller realizes the interviews are artificial, how does she still learn from the situation? **Being in the women's houses allowed her to observe daily life.**
8. Compare the education and social contacts that women and men of the village had. **The men always had more education than the women and since they did the shopping they had all the social contacts leaving the women very isolated.**
9. In what way are the women mistaken in their beliefs about education? **They believe if they had an education they could get a paid job but one of Indias biggest problems is the number of young men with educations who cannot find work.**
10. How many children does Sheela have? 8 Why doesn't she get the sterilization she wants? **Her husband won't let her, he thinks it will make her weak.**
11. Who do the villagers believe holds real power in the village? **Shardul Singh, the largest landlord.**
12. What did the women describe as the main problem facing them? **Lack of paid work.**
13. Why is it nearly impossible for peasants to improve their economic position under the sharecropping system? **The landlord is always taking a share of their crops making it difficult for marginal farmers to get ahead.**
14. Why was it a revolutionary change when Prasad was elected as the pradhan of Khajuron? **A lower caste person now had political power in the village.**
15. In what ways are village politics similar to politics in the U.S.?
16. Why do you think the election turnout was so high? **To the villagers it was like a festival.**
17. What does Awasthi believe the women of this village want? **He believes they want to be treated as they have been in the past.** How significant do you think female participation in the political process is?
18. What does she mean "The labor the women performed was essential to life but largely invisible"?

CHAPTER 5
NO MORE LITTLE GIRLS

1. Define **infanticide.**
2. How do the villagers in the south compare with those in the north? **Better fed.**
3. What is the reason villagers give for murdering their infant daughters? **It costs to much money to marry off a girl.**
4. What has the government done that suggests female infanticide may be fairly common? **Hired midwives to check in villages especially when a poor family has a third or fourth daughter.**
5. What do you think it does to a society when the birth of a daughter is dreaded by a society?
6. In what way is it standard practice to neglect female babies? **Less food and medical care.**
7. What evidence do population statistics give us that might lead to conclusion that female infanticide is being practiced? **One of the few nations in the world where men outnumber women. In 1901 - 972 women to 1000 men. In 1981, 933 women to 1000 men.**
8. Why might Jaya's job have appealed to her because of her Brahmin caste? **It was a position of power over village people.**
9. What reason did Karuppai give for having their baby daughter killed? **To save her from a lifetime of suffering.** What reason did Muthuswami give? **Abortion is expensive, this is cheap.**
10. What financial plan did Mohanasundaram have for his family? **He planned to save for his first daughter's dowry and replace it with the dowry his son's wife would bring. A second daughter would ruin this plan.**
11. What are some of the contrasts in Bombay? **Rich and poor, fancy buildings and slums.**
12. What contradictions does the author feel within herself over the abortion issue? **As a feminist she believes in a woman's right to choose but she thinks it is wrong to get abortions on only female fetuses.**
13. What does the slogan "Better 500 rupees now better than 5000 later." mean? **Its cheaper to get a sex test and an abortion than to have to provide a dowry.**
14. Why do rich families who could afford a dowry abort female fetuses? **They feel shamed or a sense of failure if they have only female children.**
15. Has the test to ban tests for the sex of the fetus had any effect? **Apparently there are fewer abortions in Bombay now.**
16. Why don't some rich influential families refuse to pay dowries? **The dowry is culturally accepted it doesn't even occur to them.**

CHAPTER 6
TOWARDS EQUALITY

1. What did the government study on the status of women find? **The majority of women were actually worse off in significant ways than they were before independence.**
2. Why do women have less opportunities now in industries than in the past? **They are not give the opportunities to learn skills that new technologies require.**
3. What social class do most Indian feminists come from? **Upper, English educated class.** What must they do if their work is to have meaning? **Make their work help change the lives of the other 80% of Indian women.**
4. What is SEWA? **Self-Employed Women's Association. Trade union, premier women's organization in India, model of possible development for the poor.**
5. What was Working Women's Forum organized to do? **Make small loans to women in business, had its own bank.**
6. Give one example of activism by women in the lower class.
7. How does Kunti Devi illustrate a new awareness on the part of village women of their rights? **She owns land jointly with her husband and if the village women know a man is beating his wife they will go as a group to stop him.**
8. What did the SEWA bank enable women to do? **Get small loans, or deposit small amounts in savings.**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

9. Why don't the women want to keep savings in their own houses? **Their husbands and sons will find it and use it up.**
10. Why is it important to organize the self employed in unions? **Nearly 90% of the labor force in India is self-employed.**
11. Why is the job of paper recycling dangerous? **Women are in garbage dumps, raw sewage, dead animal, empty chemical containers and broken glass.**
12. Why is it significant when the women confronted the men who were illegally pickup the paper at the government offices? **They did not passively accept this treatment, even though they were in a weak position they fought back.**
13. What kinds of things did they use videos to teach the women? **How to sell vegetables, how to use the bank, speak in court, how to organize.** Why do you think it is important that the women in SEWA themselves made the videos?
14. When Dholakia was offered a trip abroad because of her work in SEWA, how did her family respond? **They praised her husband for letting her go.** What does this tell you about changing the position of women in India? Do you think the same thing is likely to happen in the U.S.?
15. What is the first thing Dholakia had to do in the villages before she could begin any organizing work? **Build up the trust of the villagers.**
16. Does Bumiller think the success of SEWA will be the answer to the problems faced by India's women? Explain. **No. SEWA has not been able to clone itself. Other village organizations haven't been able to duplicate its success. She feels that in a country as diverse as India there will have to be many different programs to change the position of women in society.**

CHAPTER 7
"INDIRA IS INDIA, AND INDIA IS INDIRA"

1. Why was the success of Indira Gandhi a paradox? (Be sure you understand the meaning of paradox). **In a country where women are so low on the social and political scale it is surprising that a women could be elected as Prime Minister.**
2. Why was Indira sometimes linked to the Goddess Durga? **Because she led the nation successfully in war with Pakistan.**
3. Some people do not see Indira's rise to power as representing a successful woman. What do they think Indira's rise is symbolic of? **The dynastic politics of South Asia, where women rise because they were married or daughters of successful men.**
4. What were some of Indira's interest that were very typical of her sex and caste? **Decorating, arranging flowers, gossip.**
5. In what way was she a role model for other women even though she didn't promote women? **She affected what other women believed they could achieve. Women had more success in elections after her death.**
6. Why are women politicians often more accessible to their constituents than male politicians? **It is more likely that their families have remained in the area that elected them and so they travel home more often.**
7. Describe the atmosphere of the home Indira grew up in? **Her family was very political, leaders of the Congress party, at one time great admirers of everything British. Political meetings in her house, as a child she practiced giving political speeches, burned her favorite doll because it was made in Britain, her parents went to jail regularly. Her mother became a feminist but she did not.**
8. In what way did Indira go against Indian tradition in her marriage? **She picked her own husband who was lower than she was on the social scale.**
9. How did her stay in prison change her? **It gave her political legitimacy. She said being in jail was very different from visiting jail.**
10. How did Congress party members who were in jail make use of their time? **Often wrote books.**
11. What role did Indira play when her father became Prime Minister? **She served as his hostess, leaving her husband at home very unhappy.**

12. Why did the Congress party committee appoint Mrs. Gandhi when Shastri dies in 1966? **They thought they were getting a woman they could easily manipulate.**
13. What are some of the ways Mrs. Gandhi demonstrated her strength? **Cold assessment, shrewd timing, capacity to fight to the finish.**
14. How did she deal with an attempt to bring her down? **Declared a state of emergency, took over the newspapers and radio stations, civil rights suspended.** What does this tell you about her strength as a politician?
15. How was Mrs. Gandhi finally removed from power ? **She was assassinated by her Sikh body guards because she had ordered an attack on Sikh terrorists.**
16. How did Rajiv Gandhi actually change his mother's position about women in politics? **He appointed more women to government positions.**
17. What did the divorce case of Shah Bano come to symbolize for the Muslims? **What the future of the Muslims was in a nation that is 80% Hindu.**
18. In the Muslim culture if a woman is divorced who has the responsibility for her at that point? **Her family.**
19. How did running for Parliament change Gayatri Devi's view of India? **Seeing and meeting people of India she realized she knew nothing of the villagers way of life.**
20. In what way is Mrs. Pandit typical of women who have been important in Indian political life? **She owed her political career to her relationship with a male politician.**
21. In what way did the state of Kerala treat women in an unusual way? **Matrilineal system of inheritance, highest literacy rate and lowest birthrate for women.**
22. Once women get into politics in India how is it the same for them there as everywhere? **It is a dirty expensive business, run by men.**

CHAPTER 8
REKHA, DIMPLE, SRIDEVI AND FRIENDS

1. What is the role given to women in many of India's contemporary movies? **Battered women, raped, for the hero to rescue and play savior.**
2. In what way are movies an escape? **Chance for many people who live on the edge of survival to momentarily forget their troubles.**
3. In what way are the women in films unusual in India? **They are some of the most successful women in India. Money and power. They break the moral taboos about sexuality.**
4. What is the image of women portrayed in films? **Actors are considered big stars and command the big fees. Women are merely backups to the men. Women are not seen as having complexities and dreams and ambitions of their own. Actresses are guardians of conservative traditions, women who are raped because they wore suggestive clothes. Good girls wear saris and live with husband and children.**
5. What is the basic pattern in Indian films? **Young boy and girl who can't get married because girls father opposes it, series of violent fights and car chases, boy and girl end up together singing in a meadow whether it makes any sense or not.**
6. What did Dimples husband demand that they do as soon as they were married? **She had to give up her career and stay home and be his "wife".** Do you think a big American movie star would agree to do that?
7. At 30 years of age what happened to Rekha? **Men no longer valued her because she wasn't "young".** In what way can we see this same attitude as being prevalent in American society? **Models must be teenagers, there are very few good movie roles for women in their 40s and above. The image that is sold to are society is one that totally values youth.**
8. Why are Indian actresses usually fatter than American actresses? **Plumpness implies leisure and wealth in a country where most people are starvation thin.**
9. Compare the salary made by a highly paid male star to that of the top female star. **Male $1 million, female - $150,000.**
10. What media in the U.S. are Indian fan magazines like? **People and National Inquirer.**

11. Why did Shabana Azmi star in both the small, serious art films and the low quality popular films? **She felt this helped her become a star and brought more attention to the art films.**
12. What does Azmi think is the real advantage of being a popular film star in India? **She has choices that most Indian women never have. An actress is treated like a real person, she's handling her finances, she's employing people, she's equal to a man and she realizes she's able to do this in spite of her cultural heritage.**
13. How did Azmi's mother differ from ordinary Indian wife because she was the wife of a communist? **She was told to go out and get work.**
14. According to Azmi how do Indian women feel about being successful? **You are losing your femininity and you need to compensate by being more submissive to your husband at home.**
15. How are Indian actresses still following the rules for women in India? **Still react as daughters and wives, parents and husbands take over and do decision making.**

CHAPTER 9
POETS AND REVOLUTIONARIES

1. What are some of the difficulties faced by the city of Calcutta? **Millions of poverty stricken people living on the streets, raw sewage floating in gutters, horrendous traffic jams, Prime Minister called it a dying city.**
2. In what way is the city a cultural center? **Great concentration of poets, artists, filmmakers, novelists, actors and thinkers.**
3. How are women treated in Calcutta? **Better off than those in the North, dowry deaths are rare, women not as afraid of harassment and verbal abuse, benefited from the legacy of Rabindranath Tagore one of great supporters of women's rights.**
4. What is the theme of Sen's film Paroma? **A Bengali housewife who is imprisoned by her life as a wife and mother. She realizes her life within the marriage is solely based on marriage contract not on any understanding between husband and wife.**
5. Why doesn't Sen consider herself a feminist? **She feels she has never been oppressed and had choices about career or family.**
6. How does Sen think her directorial strengths differ from a man's? **She lacks confidence to do large crowd scenes but thinks she surpasses men in intimate sensual scenes.**
7. How does Sen feel about marriage? **She sees marriage and romantic love as being two different things, you may have both the first few years but then you have to give each other space.**
8. What happens to a marriage when the woman is more successful than the man? **It is very hard on the marriage. Women are conditioned to want their husbands to be more successful than they are.**
9. What other contradictions does she find in herself as a woman in a relationship with a man? **She wants to be spoiled and taken care of but when she lets a man do that he wants control over her, obedience.**
10. What struggle does the author see in the painting of Veena Bhargava that seems to reflect the reality being a woman in India? **An anger to discover herself as an artist in world controlled by men.**
11. When she marries and has children what happens to her art? **Her art is put on hold. Nothing happens, she is frustrated.**
12. What is her interpretation of the female world? **Hemmed in existence is unhealthy.**
13. Does she feel marrying and having children benefitted her? **She has had to devote time to family that took away from her painting but if she had not been married she might not have been able to live on her painting.**
14. In what way did Dev Sen follow a very traditional female path in life? **She followed her husband around from job to job and sacrificed her own education and career.**
15. How does the poem on page 224 suggest she feels she may have given up too much for her husband?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

16. What does the poem on page 225-226 suggest to you about how she felt about her husband's success? **He has reached a tremendous height and she is far below and unhappy, a bottomless pit.**
17. How does Aparna Sen say she deals with the terrible poverty of Calcutta that is part of her experience every day? **We don't rationalize, periodically we feel guilty. But we don't like to think about it because you can't live like that.**
18. How did these women feel about improving the lives of other women around them? **They did not feel much of a commitment to doing that.**

CHAPTER 10
HER OWN PLACE IN THE SUN
1. What kind of a magazine is Femina? **Dedicated to the middle class Indian housewife, recipes and family articles.**
2. How does Vimla become independent and self sufficient? **Her husband travels on business and leaves her alone in India and she learns to solve many problems on her own.**
3. How does Vimla begin to help her readers become more ambitious for themselves? **By putting articles like career counseling in among the recipes.**
4. What group is Femina targeted toward? **Newly emerging middle class women.** What percent of Indian population is this? **Top 10%, 80 million people.**
5. What did Kiran Bedi achieve? **First woman to become a police officer.** How well did she do the job? **She did not back down from controversy.**
6. What group in society did Kiran Bedi find herself dealing with? **Disaffected members of a new generation of young people who felt left out of the prosperity and turned to crime and terrorism.**
7. How effective are police in India? **Generally poorly paid, some corruption, disaffected and in some cases despised.**
8. Who did Kiran Bedi admire and why? **Golda Meir because she was self made.**
9. What traits did Bedi possess that are not desirable qualities in an Indian woman? **Self-confident, direct, impatient, uncompromising and confrontational.**
10. Who did Kiran get her goals from? **Strongly influenced by her father.** Identify at least three life goals you have for yourself? Who influenced you the most in developing those goals?
11. How was Kiran received by police officials when she applied to be the first woman on the force? **They tried to discourage her.**
12. What difficulties do you think she would have faced in this culture as a woman giving orders to men?
13. In what ways is her marriage non-traditional? **She and her husband live 250 miles apart and see each other only twice a year.**
14. Who does she see as the loser in her marriage? **Her husband because he has missed seeing his daughter grow up. She has lost a mental companion.**
15. How did Kiran think her conflict with the lawyers was affected by the fact that she was a woman? **I think in a woman they found a common enemy. They resented it that a woman did not surrender or concede.**
16. What group does she hope to have contact with at the "kitty party"? **Middle class housewives.**
17. According to Indian men how do middle class women have power in this society? **Chief manager and nurturer at home, behind the scenes power, influencing decisions.** After reading this section discuss whether you think middle class Indian women really have significant power in their family situations.
18. How is Mrs. Rana's life different from her mother's? **Her mother never knew english and didn't read any magazines so she was ignorant of national and international events.**
19. What near tragedy did the family suffer when India and Pakistan were divided? **They were on the wrong side of the border. There were riots and many people were killed. They were lucky to get out alive. They lost all their belongings.**
20. How much education did Mrs. Rana have? **Bachelor's degree from Delhi Univeristy and a Master's degree.** Do you think a country with limited resources should educate a group of people who

then stay home and keep house and raise children? Explain your answer.
21. How are Mrs. Rana's daughters different from her? **They all have careers and expect to work.**
22. What kind of a role model is the character Rajani in the TV soap opera? **Aggressively took on people in everyday life who tried to cheat her.**
23. What is the old way that advertisers trying to sell to Indian women tried to appeal to them? **As doormats whose only role was as a wife and mother.** What new form of advertising is being tried? **Women who are no longer willing to be trampled on.**
24. In what way is Mrs. Rana like Kiran Bedi? **She has a few regrets but has learned to live with them.**

CHAPTER 11
SMALL FAMILY, HAPPY FAMILY
1. What motivates government health workers to get women in to be sterilized? **Their pay is docked if they don't meet a certain quota.**
2. What did the government do to encourage women to get sterilized? **They offered poor women $24.** Do you think this is a fair tactic for the government to use? Discuss
3. How is the laparoscopy operation better than tubal ligation? **Quicker, cheaper, women can get back to normal schedule after only 24 hours, one doctor can do many women in a day.**
4. In what way has India's development contributed to the increased population? **Spread of penicillin and vaccines and other medical advances cut the death rate substantially and the birth rate remained high.**
5. What are some of the easily visible signs of overpopulation? **Packed commuter buses, masses of shacks in the streets, miles of hillsides denuded of trees. Every major problem India faces has its roots in the population problem.**
6. Why aren't vasectomies used more often? **Men equate them with castration and they were forced on the population in 1977.**
7. What is the biggest single obstacle to limiting family size in India? **The desire for male children.**
8. Why does the slogan Small families, happy families, not work for most of India's population. **Because large families mean lots of children to work on the land.**
9. How does the marriage age law illustrate the limits of legislation on people's behavior? **The legal limit for getting married is 18 years old but many families just ignore it.**
10. Why has the pill been a failure for most women taking it in India? **They take it erratically.**
11. What problem is caused by giving health workers quotas? **They make all kinds of distortions in the statistics they hand in to the bureaucrats.**
12. What is one suggestion about why the tribal people were more cooperative about family planning than other groups in India? **They were more desperate for the money promised if they were sterilized.**
13. Why might it be easier to get villagers to agree to use the pill and condoms than to be sterilized? **They could agree to use either of those and then never do it but sterilization they can't fake and it is permanent.**
14. What is the reason given by the mother-in-law why the village woman won't be sterilized? **She doesn't have her husband's permission.** What do you think the real reason is?
15. What was SEWA Rural's strategy for bringing the birthrate down in their area? **Give children good health care so mothers would be confident children would survive then bring up the issue of birth control.**
16. What did the Desais close relationship with the villagers lead them to conclude about health statistics collected by the government? **That the government's reports about infant mortality were far short of being accurate.**
17. In some ways how did being on the bottom of the caste system help some village women? **It freed them from some restrictions such as veiling their faces.**
18. What were some of the beliefs the dais passed on to pregnant women and new mothers? **Cut umbilical cord with unsanitary knife, smooth wound with cow dung, don't drink milk when pregnant, green vegetables cause miscarriages.**

19. What happened to the better trained women the government sent into the villages to act as midwives? **The women wouldn't listen to them because they were strangers, and they were young and had born no children.**
20. How do women in India feel about bringing up someone else's children? **They don't want to do it.**
21. Can you think of any other ways besides giving goals to government workers and paying people who have sterilization that India might bring down its birth rate? Discuss.
22. How do statistics demonstrate that things seem to be better for women in Kerala? **More women than men, high age for marriage, birth rate dropping, low infant mortality rate, high literacy rate, more jobs for women.**
23. Explain what matrilineal means. **Property inherited through female line.**
24. As sisters stayed with their parents in the family home when did they see their husbands? **Men were nocturnal visitors.**
25. What signs are there that the equality of women is being lost? **Women's work is undervalued, political power remains in the hands of men. Women worked in the freedom movement but men were unwilling to share the power they received with women.**
26. Why isn't improving the position of women in society enough to solve the family planning problem? **Because this could take several generations and the problem of population pressure is too pressing to wait that long.**
27. What conclusion does the author draw about the position of women in India? **That the population problem cannot be solved without improving the condition of women in India and that it is crucial to solve the population problem.**
28. After reading this chapter write a paragraph discussing how you feel about the population issue in India. Do you feel it is a critical problem, should people be free to have as many children as they want, should the government use more forceful means to lower the birthrate. If this is such a pressing problem should the government make it easier for families to get pre-natal sex tests so they could abort female fetuses? There are no easy answers to any of this. I want you to think creatively about it.

CHAPTER 12
DEPARTURE AND CONCLUSION

1. How does Ruth Prawer Jhabvala describe the phases a foreigner often goes through in India? **First, tremendous enthusiasm, second, everything in India is not so marvelous, third, everything Indian is abominable.**
2. How did studying India give her insight into her own culture? **Felt anger at friends who didn't understand why she wasn't happy to give up her job to follow her husband to an interesting place. Realized that many people in American society believe women have won equality in this society and should have nothing to complain about.**
3. According to Gloria Steinhem how do women become more radical with age? **When she enters the work force and discovers that men still control the workplace, when she marries and learns that is not an equal institution, when she has children and finds that she is the principal child rearer, and last when she discovers that age still has more penalties for women than for men.**
4. The author does not expect to see change for Indian women within her life time? If it takes more than fifty years for change to come do you feel that it will be too late? Discuss.

MAY YOU BE THE MOTHER OF A HUNDRED SONS
ELIZABETH BUMILLER

CHAPTER 1
ARRIVAL AND INTRODUCTION

1. What are some of the contradictions that confront Bumiller in her first experience of New Delhi?
2. Why doesn't she want to write a book about women in India?
3. What causes her to become more interested in women's issues?
4. How is the birth of a girl viewed in Indian culture? Discuss how you think parents in the U.S. feel at the birth of a girl. Have you ever heard someone say they wanted a boy to carry on the family name? Do you think many women in the U.S. would choose to have an abortion if they knew the fetus was a female?
5. What is the life style of 75% of the women of India like?
6. What are the tasks involved in making every meal?
7. Why are girl children less likely to survive the first year than boys?
8. According to the World Bank what is the condition of women around the world? Can you think of any ways in America that women are discriminated against?
9. What is purdah? If you had always been in Purdah how do you think the outside world would seem to you?
10. At what period in Indian history were women better off than they are now? Does this tell you anything about patterns in history?
11. Why do you think the reformers were opposed to purdah, sati and child marriage?
12. What was Gandhi's view of women?
13. What problem is faced by any foreigner trying to write about India? How do you think some foreigners, the Japanese for example, might view American teenagers?
14. In trying to understand women in India why does the author feel she has come to the center?

CHAPTER 2
WEDDING FIRST, LOVE LATER

1. What is your reaction to the title of this chapter?
2. How common is arranged marriage in India? List what you would consider to be the advantages of an arranged marriage. Why do some educated Indians argue that there system is better than ours?
3. Describe the view these Indian women have about marriage and compare it to your own. Do any of these ideas sound better to you than the marriage customs in America (which includes a 50% divorce rate and living with people before marrying them.
4. What major family change has taken place when the marriage is concluded?
5. How is remarriage after a divorce treated differently for men than for women?

CHAPTER 3
FLAMES

1. Look up the definition for **sati.**
2. What is the message of the story of Sita?
3. How are Indian women raised to see fire?
4. What are the two differing accounts of what happened to Surinder Kaur?
5. What is believed to be the usual reason for bride burnings?
6. How does increased education contribute to the increase of the dowry problem?
7. How does the author influence you to think that bride burning is common? Does she give you any solid evidence of bride burning?
8. What were some of the problems Surinder experienced in her early marriage?
9. What are some of the differences between Surinder's story and Manjit?
10. Why does the author begin to think perhaps this case is not about dowry?

9. What reason did Karuppai give for having their baby daughter killed? What reason did Muthuswami give?
10. What financial plan did Mohanasundaram have for his family?
11. What are some of the contrasts in Bombay?
12. What contradictions does the author feel within herself over the abortion issue?
13. What does the slogan "Better 500 rupees now better than 5000 later." mean?
14. Why do rich families who could afford a dowry abort female fetuses?
15. Has the test to ban tests for the sex of the fetus had any effect?
16. Why don't some rich influential families refuse to pay dowries?

CHAPTER 6
TOWARDS EQUALITY

1. What did the government study on the status of women find?
2. Why do women have less opportunities now in industries than in the past?
3. What social class do most Indian feminists come from? What must they do if their work is to have meaning?
4. What is SEWA?
5. What was Working Women's Forum organized to do?
6. Give one example of activism by women in the lower class.
7. How does Kunti Devi illustrate a new awareness on the part of village women of their rights?
8. What did the SEWA bank enable women to do?
9. Why don't the women want to keep savings in their own houses?
10. Why is it important to organize the self employed in unions?
11. Why is the job of paper recycling dangerous?
12. Why is it significant when the women confronted the men who were illegally pickup the paper at the government offices?
13. What kinds of things did they use videos to teach the women? Why do you think it is important that the women in SEWA themselves made the videos?
14. When Dholakia was offered a trip abroad because of her work in SEWA, how did her family respond? What does this tell you about changing the position of women in India? Do you think the same thing is likely to happen in the U.S.?
15. What is the first thing Dholakia had to do in the villages before she could begin any organizing work?
16. Does Bumiller think the success of SEWA will be the answer to the problems faced by India's women? Explain.

CHAPTER 7
"INDIRA IS INDIA, AND INDIA IS INDIRA"

1. Why was the success of Indira Gandhi a paradox? (Be sure you understand the meaning of paradox).
2. Why was Indira sometimes linked to the Goddess Durga?
3. Some people do not see Indira's rise to power as representing a successful woman. What do they think Indira's rise is symbolic of?
4. What were some of Indira's interest that were very typical of her sex and caste?
5. In what way was she a role model for other women even though she didn't promote women?
6. Why are women politicians often more accessible to their constituents than male politicians?
7. Describe the atmosphere of the home Indira grew up in?
8. In what way did Indira go against Indian tradition in her marriage?
9. How did her stay in prison change her?
10. How did Congress party members who were in jail make use of their time?
11. What role did Indira play when her father became Prime Minister?
12. Why did the Congress party committee appoint Mrs. Gandhi when Shastri dies in 1966?
13. What are some of the ways Mrs. Gandhi demonstrated her strength?
14. How did she deal with an attempt to bring her down? What does this tell you about her strength as a politician?

15. How was Mrs. Gandhi finally removed from power ?
16. How did Rajiv Gandhi actually change his mother's position about women in politics?
17. What did the divorce case of Shah Bano come to symbolize for the Muslims?
18. In the Muslim culture if a woman is divorced who has the responsibility for her at that point?
19. How did running for Parliament change Gayatri Devi's view of India?
20. In what way is Mrs. Pandit typical of women who have been important in Indian political life?
21. In what way did the state of Kerala treat women in an unusual way?
22. Once women get into politics in India how is it the same for them there as everywhere?

CHAPTER 8
REKHA, DIMPLE, SRIDEVI AND FRIENDS

1. What is the role given to women in many of India's contemporary movies?
2. In what way are movies an escape?
3. In what way are the women in films unusual in India?
4. What is the image of women portrayed in films?
5. What is the basic pattern in Indian films?
6. What did Dimples husband demand that they do as soon as they were married? Do you think a big American movie star would agree to do that?
7. At 30 years of age what happened to Rekha? In what way can we see this same attitude as being prevalent in American society?
8. Why are Indian actresses usually fatter than American actresses?
9. Compare the salary made by a highly paid male star to that of the top female star.
10. What media in the U.S. are Indian fan magazines like?
11. Why did Shabana Azmi star in both the small, serious art films and the low quality popular films?
12. What does Azmi think is the real advantage of being a popular film star in India?
13. How did Azmi's mother differ from ordinary Indian wife because she was the wife of a communist?
14. According to Azmi how do Indian women feel about being successful?
15. How are Indian actresses still following the rules for women in India?

CHAPTER 9
POETS AND REVOLUTIONARIES

1. What are some of the difficulties faced by the city of Calcutta?
2. In what way is the city a cultural center?
3. How are women treated in Calcutta?
4. What is the theme of Sen's film Paroma?
5. Why doesn't Sen consider herself a feminist?
6. How does Sen think her directorial strengths differ from a man's?
7. How does Sen feel about marriage?
8. What happens to a marriage when the woman is more successful than the man?
9. What other contradictions does she find in herself as a woman in a relationship with a man?
10. What struggle does the author see in the painting of Veena Bhargava that seems to reflect the reality being a woman in India?
11. When she marries and has children what happens to her art?
12. What is her interpretation of the female world?
13. Does she feel marrying and having children benefitted her?
14. In what way did Dev Sen follow a very traditional female path in life?
15. How does the poem on page 224 suggest she feels she may have given up too much for her husband?
16. What does the poem on page 225-226 suggest to you about how she felt about her husband's success?
17. How does Aparna Sen say she deals with the terrible poverty of Calcutta that is part of her experience every day?
18. How did these women feel about improving the lives of other women around them?

16. What did the Desais close relationship with the villagers lead them to conclude about health statistics collected by the government?
17. In some ways how did being on the bottom of the caste system help some village women?
18. What were some of the beliefs the dais passed on to pregnant women and new mothers?
19. What happened to the better trained women the government sent into the villages to act as midwives?
20. How do women in India feel about bringing up someone else's children?
21. Can you think of any other ways besides giving goals to government workers and paying people who have sterilization that India might bring down its birth rate? Discuss.
22. How do statistics demonstrate that things seem to be better for women in Kerala?
23. Explain what matrilineal means.
24. As sisters stayed with their parents in the family home when did they see their husbands?
25. What signs are there that the equality of women is being lost?
26. Why isn't improving the position of women in society enough to solve the family planning problem?
27. What conclusion does the author draw about the position of women in India?
28. After reading this chapter write a paragraph discussing how you feel about the population issue in India. Do you feel it is a critical problem, should people be free to have as many children as they want, should the government use more forceful means to lower the birthrate. If this is such a pressing problem should the government make it easier for families to get pre-natal sex tests so they could abort female fetuses? There are no easy answers to any of this. I want you to think creatively about it.

CHAPTER 12
DEPARTURE AND CONCLUSION

1. How does Ruth Prawer Jhabvala describe the phases a foreigner often goes through in India?
2. How did studying India give her insight into her own culture?
3. According to Gloria Steinhem how do women become more radical with age?
4. The author does not expect to see change for Indian women within her life time? If it takes more than fifty years for change to come do you feel that it will be too late? Discuss.